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(St. Louis, MO) -- Congressman Russ Carnahan (MO-03), as founder and co-chair of the Congressional MS Caucus, encourages everyone to show their commitment to the multiple sclerosis (MS) movement with simple actions throughout MS Awareness Week (March 2 - 8). Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week was created by the Multiple Sclerosis Coalition to raise national awareness about the disease and to recognize those who have dedicated their time and talent to promoting MS research and programs.

**"Whatever you do makes a difference, whether it means you wear orange one day this week or tell five of your friends that this week is MS Awareness Week,"** said Congressman Carnahan.

In order to raise awareness, Representatives Barbara Lee, Michael C. Burgess and Carnahan introduced a resolution recognizing and supporting the goals and ideals of Multiple Sclerosis Awareness Week, encouraging the President, States, and local governments to issue proclamations designating MS Awareness Week, and encouraging the media to help educate the public about MS.

The resolution could be up for consideration on the House floor Wednesday, March 4.

Later this week, Congressmen Chris Van Hollen, Carnahan and Burgess plan to reintroduce the National MS and Parkinson's Disease Registries Act for the 111<sup>th</sup> Congress to create a national surveillance system at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

"Whether you're a Move It maverick or a Move It motivator, you can make a difference in the lives of over 6,000 people who live with MS in our area," said Phyllis Robsham, president of the Society's Gateway Area Chapter. "There are fun and easy activities throughout MS Awareness week that will make you feel 'good' while you do good," Robsham said.

To find out ways to be a part of MS Awareness Week, and encourage others to move it too, visit [nationalMSSociety.org](http://nationalMSSociety.org):

- Download web banners and widgets for your social network pages
- Share your story about how you are "moving it"
- Sign up to volunteer at an upcoming chapter event
- Form a team for a Bike MS or Walk MS
- Email a legislator about an issue important to people with MS
- Tell five people it's MS Awareness Week and ask them to tell five more people

- Support the Society - every donation moves us closer to a world free of MS
- Raise MS aWEARness by wearing orange; need something new? Visit:

<http://www.msstoreipp.org/index.php>

- Visit [nationalMSSociety.org](http://nationalMSSociety.org) every day during MS Awareness Week for new tips and ideas

Last Congress, Congressman Carnahan worked with co-chair Congressman Michael Burgess and other Members of the Caucus to advocate for critical funding for MS research at the Department of Defense (DOD). These efforts successfully led to \$5 million in funding at DOD in fiscal year 2009. Carnahan and Burgess are leading an effort for FY2010 in order to obtain funding again. Initial studies indicate that there is a potential link between combat service in the military and MS. While MS research has not been granted its own program, last year MS was listed as a disease eligible for research funding through a competitive DOD research program.

**"Because of small gestures by everyday people and cutting-edge research by our nation's finest, each day people living with MS have more of a future to look forward to rather than a past to look back upon,"** said Carnahan. **"This week is yet another reminder of how much of a pleasure it continues to be working with both the National and Gateway Multiple Sclerosis Societies to increase awareness and seek solutions for individuals living with MS."**

Multiple sclerosis interrupts the flow of information between the brain and the body and stops people from moving. Every hour in the United States, someone is newly diagnosed with MS, an unpredictable, often disabling disease of the central nervous system. Symptoms range from numbness and tingling to blindness and paralysis. The progress, severity and specific symptoms of MS in any one person cannot yet be predicted, but advances in research and treatment are moving us closer to a world free of MS. Most people with MS are diagnosed between the ages of 20 and 50, with more than twice as many women as men being diagnosed with the disease. MS affects more than 400,000 people in the U.S. and 2.5 million worldwide.